

## **Laudation**

on the occasion of awarding departing United States Ambassador George Herbert Walker

**Dear Mr. Ambassador:**

*A rich – eventful and successful – ambassadorial tenure comes to a close in a few weeks in Budapest, as we bid farewell to the Ambassador of the United States of America, Mr. George Herbert Walker.*

*Ties between our countries have grown stronger during the past three years. Our relationship as allies has reached new levels; our strategic partnership is blossoming in several areas beyond the realm of cooperation in security policy.*

*No doubt the high point of your diplomatic tenure, Sir, in Hungary has been the recent visit to Budapest of President George W. Bush. I am aware of your personal efforts to realize this successful event. This visit will remain a significant moment in U.S.-Hungarian relations, and took place as part of the commemorations of the fiftieth anniversary of the 1956 uprising. It was uplifting to hear the President of the United States pay homage to heroes of 1956, to speak of Lajos Kossuth and recite lines by Petőfi. As President Bush emphasized in his speech on Gellért Hill, our nations and peoples are bound together by the spirit of liberty and their commitment to democracy.*

*Mr. Ambassador, you have contributed greatly to strengthening U.S.-Hungarian economic and commercial ties. By showcasing the stable business climate Hungary offers, you have played a significant role in making Hungary a leader in U.S. investments in the region.*

*I would also like to express my appreciation for your work in the field of sciences, and especially for encouraging bilateral cooperation in the area of higher education. I also appreciate your work in health-related programs, which certainly resonated with Hungarian society.*

*I am confident that you will continue, Mr. Ambassador, to pay attention to the relationship of the United States and Hungary, and that this nation can continue to rely on you as a friend.*

*In recognition of your outstanding work in developing bilateral Hungarian-American relations, I am pleased to present to you the Middle Cross of the Order of Merit from the Republic of Hungary.*